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20 September 1946

MEMORANDUM TO: CHIEF, INTERDEPARTMENTAL COORDINATING  
AND PLANNING STAFF

SUBJECT: National Intelligence Requirements

1. Herewith are four copies of the National Intelligence Requirements - China, revised in accordance with the suggestions made at the meeting of 13 September 1946.

2. The Plans and Requirements Staff is of the opinion that the approach to the problem of formulating National Intelligence Requirements (NIR) should be changed as follows:

a. It should be commenced on a world-wide basis and should not be confined to a short-time period.

b. The statement of essential questions to be answered should be issued as a result of a command decision and should be on a broad basis of matters affecting the national security.

c. Once the statement in b is issued it becomes the guide for the research program; then the next step required is an analysis and breakdown of the NIR in order to obtain the essential indications, or requests for specific information, in such detail as is required for use of the collecting agencies.

3. If, nevertheless, it is desired to proceed on the basis of the statement of intelligence requirements for China only, and for a short period only, the following recommendations are made:

a. That the policy statement now forming Part I be omitted. It is useful as a guide but should not be overemphasized or be a part of the final statement, since it does not necessarily cover important intelligence requirements, nor does it allow for possible developments which might change the policy, and it therefore may be a dangerously limiting factor. The aim in preparing NIR should be to cover all elements affecting the security of the United States.

b. The statement following the colon in the fourth sentence of Part II ("policies and actions"), could be used as the basis of a command statement agreed to by the intelligence agencies.

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c. The command statement as agreed on would then be analyzed and broken down into indications similar to the statement in Part III. The analysis and indications would then be furnished to the collection agencies.

4. If it is decided to proceed with the China program it is recommended, nevertheless, that a program for world-wide NIR be initiated at once.

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Acting Chief  
Plans and Requirements Staff

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